Annex "A" Subparagraph 1g, Sociological Background

FAMILY

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The basic unit of Hungarian peasant society is the extended or joint family (családd), i.e. kinspeople living under the same roof, the family of the master and his brothers and sons with their families.

The head of the peasant household is the father, referred to as gazda ('master,' 'owner,' 'farmer'). His wife, the gazdasszony, enjoys [562] the same prestige and ranks immediately after her husband. These two govern not only their servants and farm workers but they also have definite authority over those members of the family living on the same farm. [601] The most obvious sign of the reverence the members of the family pay to the gazda and gazdasszony is that everyone addresses them in the polite third person (maga, kend, cf. Germ. sie, Fr. vous, Span. Vd.), while the gazda and his wife uniformly address others in the second person (te, cf. Germ. du, Fr. and Sp. tu).

The gazda is practically the sole owner of the family property. He divides the labor on the farm and assigns the duties of the different male family members. In some communities he even directs the work of the women-folk. He collects the produce and administers the profits, and he is the only one entitled to make purchases; his duties are to cover the unavoidable

596 expenses, or taxes, of the family members and to see to it that their immediate personal needs in food and clothing are taken care of. His supervisory activity takes up so much time that he sometimes does not take an [462] active part in the field labor. Nevertheless, it is his privilege as gazda to initiate every important male activity, the selection of seed, the plowing, sowing and harvesting. He consumes the first and choice bite of every product and is the first to use new equipment, even the new dishes. In vineyard areas he runs the cellar and distributes the wine. Undisputed master at home, the gazda is also the high priest of the family, officiating at many superstitious ceremonies aimed at the assurance of a plentiful crop.

Upon the death of the head of the household, his heirs may split the family farm or they may elect to stay together, in which case a new gazda is chosen among them.

596 562 The wife of the master, the gazdasszony, is second in rank, as is clearly indicated by her functions in several superstitious practices. [783] For example, on Christmas Eve, the gazda lights a fire in the out-buildings in order to purify them, while the gazdasszony feeds the animals. Depending upon the region, she may or may not lose her prerogatives after the death of her husband and the election of a new gazda. If she dies first, the gazda

selects a new gazdasszony among his daughters-in law. The gazdasszony 596 562 [462]
determines the duties of each female member of the family (cooking and distributing food, crafts, especially spinning, poultry raising, etc.) and disposes of the profits gained from these activities.

The family house is divided among the members of the family. In 596 513
principle, the main living room belongs to the gazda and gazdasszony, but if they are poor, others may live in the same room. Here everyone has his own bed, chest and corner for the cleaning (possibly whitewashing) for which he is responsible. However, in most cases, there is at least another room in the building which then belongs to the other members of the family. As a rule, men do not sleep in the house, but on the porch or in the stable; the elder people use the main living room and the womenfolk--daughters and daughters-in-law of the gazda--the second room (kamra, kisház). If there is only one married son, he and his wife take over the small room completely; when several sons bring in their families, they may simply add new units to the family house.

If the family becomes too large or the wives of the brothers too 596
quarrelsome among themselves, the men may decide to separate and to divide the family farm. If friendly agreement cannot be unanimously reached, they resort to vilakozás, i.e. the division of the holdings into as many more or less equal shares as there are males, and a subsequent drawing of rods

596 (historically arrows) of different length to determine the order of choice.
[428] The ancestral house, its immediate surroundings, part of the equipment and a share of land remains with the razda which, upon his death, reverts to his youngest son. The Palóc have special customs connected with vdlakozás.

To the family circle belong also the foradott vő, a son-in-law who has married the only daughter of the razda and has, therefore, been
[608] admitted as a full member of the family, and [redacted] foster brothers (tejtestvér 'milk-brother').

357 The servants and laborers who work for the razda are treated on the basis of almost complete social equality with the other members of the family; with them they share living quarters and food.

608 The institution of several koma (godfathers') broadens the family circle also. In most parts of Hungary, a child will have at least a dozen godparents, and these sponsoring couples (one couple is called 'first godparents') chosen by the parents, are considered as belonging by virtue
[601] of their sacred office to the family itself. The parents and godparents address each other with the polite mara, regardless of age, and their relationship is considered to be so binding as to suggest blood relationship;
[995] indeed, in some parts of the country, marriage between the children of parents and the first godparents is considered incestuous.

1 [head of house: H -- Analyst]

584 The influence of elders is decisive with regard to marriage;
the parents or their deputees take part in many customs pertaining to court-
ship and their choice is practically binding for their children--sons and
[163] daughters alike. The number of children per family averaged 3.87 among
the peasants between the two world wars, with a tendency to a slight decrease
ever since.

● 596 In the patriarchal family structure of the Magyar peasantry, the
influence of elders is, in most aspects of social life, decisive. Not only
does the child grow up and is taught in the family, but, in many cases,
he continues to live together with his parents under their benevolent but
authoritarian rule. The sometimes excessive conservatism of the Magyar
peasant has its roots in his everyday life in the family. The regimented
family life, moreover, imbues him with a keen sense of duty and discipline.

The importance of the influence exerted by the peasant family upon
[867] the individual is obvious. The family not only shapes the moral individual
more than any formal education in the city, but also determines, to a
considerable extent, his attitude toward the actual regime. The peasant's
religion, his way of life, and his techniques of production are now being
attacked by multifarious governmental forces propagating rationalism,
industrialization, and collectivization. Against this propaganda, the family
life teaches Christianity, love of the soil, and especially the love of one's
own land.